

Melodies with an Octopus

by Shawn Misener

Asked to describe my work history I reach into my man-purse and pull out a live octopus. Placing him on the table between us the supervisor seems pleased. He investigates the creature from multiple angles, often using his pencil to poke at a tentacle or an eyeball.

I begin singing "Octopus' Garden", and both the supervisor and the octopus join in. I'm surprised that our harmony is near-perfect.

Suddenly we are all driven silent. The room is shaking from what feels like a massive earthquake. The supervisor, sensing the fear in me, pats my hand and says "Never you mind! This is normal in the tomato. Every few days we rile up, make sauce, and regrow again. Have you ever been in spaghetti sauce before?"

The octopus rolls inconspicuously off the table and lands on the carpet with a farting noise. "So I guess I just wait," I mumble.

"Yes, yes, you wait," the supervisor intones, smiling and tapping his fingers against his substantial gut.

